



LEOMINSTER AND WIGMORE
RURAL DISTRICT

HEREFORDSHIRE

ANNUAL REPORT

ON THE

State of the Public Health

For the Year 1944

Staff of the Public Health Department

Medical Officer of Health	H. F. GREEN, M.A., M.B., D.P.H. (On War Service from 17/7/42)
Acting Medical Officer of Health (Deputy County Medical Officer)	I. F. MACKENZIE, M.D. (Edin.), D.P.H., D.T.M. & H. (Private Tel., Weobley 59)
Clerk	B. J. SCANDRETT (On War Service from 1939)
Temporary Clerk	MISS D. M. J. BRAMFITT.
Sanitary Inspector	G. E. BULL, M.S.I.A., C.R. San. I (Tel. Kingsland 11)
Public Health Office : 4, Church Street, Leominster (Tel., Leom. 95)	

To the Chairman and Members of the Leominster and Wigmore Rural District Council.

MR. CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS,

I present herewith the Annual Report for 1944.

On the whole the health of the community has continued to be good throughout the year.

A table showing the increase in the incidence of Tuberculosis since the year 1939 has been prepared. It is well known that this disease consistently extends its grip on populations which are subjected to conditions (such as arise in wartime) involving physical strain and dietary deficiency; or where housing conditions are bad or overcrowding prevalent. The importance of milk as the vehicle by which Bovine Tuberculosis is conveyed to the human (producing mainly the non-pulmonary forms of the disease) should be borne in mind. It is unfortunately probable that a still further rise during 1945 in the occurrence of Tuberculosis will be reported in due course.

Your attention is drawn to the paragraph on Venereal Diseases.

I have pleasure in once more placing on record the high standard maintained by your Sanitary Inspector in the execution of his varied duties.

I am, your obedient Servant,

I. F. MACKENZIE,
Acting Medical Officer of Health.

June, 1945.

SECTION A. STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA:

Area (in Acres)	94,101
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1944) according to the Rate Books	3,051
Rateable Value	£17,951
Sum represented by a Penny rate	£193

EXTRACT FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR:

BIRTH RATE (per 1,000 of estimated resident population)	20.8
STILLBIRTH RATE (per 1,000 Live and Still births)	9.2
DEATH RATE (per 1,000 of estimated resident population)	12.0
INFANTILE MORTALITY RATE (per 1,000 live births)	50.9
MATERNAL MORTALITY: There was one death from maternal causes in 1944.	

COMPARABLE DATA FOR ENGLAND AND WALES, 1944:—

Birth Rate	17.6
Still Birth Rate	30.0
Death Rate	11.6
Infantile Mortality Rate	46.0

SECTION B.—GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA:

LABORATORY FACILITIES.

Laboratory facilities continued to be available at the County Public Health Laboratory, Hereford, which, for the duration of the war, is under the administration of the Medical Research Council.

CLINICS.

There are none provided by the Authority. Under County Council Schemes there were two clinics operated within the Leominster Borough at which facilities were available for residents in the Rural District.

(a) A Tuberculosis Dispensary which was held on the first Friday in the month at 11 a.m. in the Cottage Hospital Annexe.

This Tuberculosis follow-up Clinic has been discontinued in the interests of the patients, as many of them require radiological examination, which can only be provided in Hereford. The Clinic has therefore been transferred to the County Hospital, Hereford. Travel expenses incurred are repaid to the patients by the Herefordshire County Council.

(b) A Maternity and Child Welfare Centre which is conducted each Friday at 2 p.m. in the Mission Hall, Etnam Street.

The nearest Venereal Diseases Clinic is at the County Hospital, Hereford.

An Orthopaedic After-Care Clinic, which is organised on a voluntary basis, is held in the Cottage Hospital Annexe.

I am indebted to Mr. G. E. Bull, Sanitary Inspector to the Council, for the following Statement (Sections C to E) furnished under Article 27 (Sub-Section 18) of the Sanitary Officers (Outside London) Regulations. The explanatory comments are also his.

SECTION C. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER : Owing to the very dry season of the past year some parts of the district suffered a shortage of water. The National Fire Service did very useful work hauling water to the parts most affected.

Water : Sampling. 40 samples of water were taken and sent to the Emergency Public Health Laboratory at the County Offices at Hereford, with the following results, 26 satisfactory and 14 unsatisfactory. The major part of the district is served by wells, only a few parishes being favoured with a piped supply.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE : Nothing of importance occurred during the year. With the exception of the parishes served by sewers the disposal of sewage is effected through septic tanks or by burial in earth. The managers of Lucton School submitted a proposed plan for the disposal of the sewage from the school and offered to the Council the opportunity of constructing the works at a level below the village of Lucton so as to allow for future development of sewerage the village. This plan was not accepted by the Council.

RIVERS AND STREAMS : No pollution was reported upon during the year.

REFUSE COLLECTIONS : Refuse collection and disposal by tipping is carried out by the Authority in the parish of Leintwardine. There is also a tip at Kingsland, where the people can take their own refuse; also at Wigmore. In the remainder of the district individual householders make their own arrangements.

DISINFECTION ON ACCOUNT OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE : Fifty-five inspections and re-inspections were made in connection with infectious disease and disinfection was carried out at 35 houses.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA : Inspections have been made under various Acts and Orders, including the Factories Acts, and under enactments governing meat and foods.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

INSPECTIONS UNDER	No. of Inspections.	Informal Notices served	Statutory Notices served	Notices complied with
Housing and Public Health Acts	164	77	5	79
Factories	46	3	—	3
Milk and Dairies and Cowsheds ...	311	20	—	19
Bakehouses	18	2	—	2
Food Premises	231	1	—	1
Schools	8	—	—	—
Water Supplies	46	20	—	19
Infectious Diseases	55	—	—	—
Knackers Yard	9	1	—	1
Hop-Pickers' Quarters	10	1	—	1
Miscellaneous visits	—	—	—	—
	898	125	5	125

NOTICES ISSUED :

Informal	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	124
Statutory	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5

DEFECTS REMEDIED :

The following list relates to major defects only, which were remedied or in connection with which repairs were carried out.

Roofs	...	...	...	15	Pantries provided	...	...	3
Dampness	...	...	...	5	Stairs repaired	...	...	66
Floors	...	...	...	13	Windows repaired	...	...	7
Drains	...	...	...	21	Baths fitted	...	...	1
Wells	...	...	...	10	Cesspools constructed	...	...	6
New sinks fitted	...	...	...	11	Conversion of privies	...	...	15
Spouting repaired	...	...	...	9	Wash coppers repaired	...	...	6
Plastered	...	...	...	11	Chimneys repaired	...	...	10

FACTORIES : 64 Inspections have been made at the two Factories with mechanical power and at those without mechanical power in the district. The factories without mechanical power are small, generally only two or three persons being employed. Three informal notices were served for minor defects. On the whole the regulations are carried out satisfactorily.

CAMPING SITES : There are no registered camping sites in the district. Some camps were used by organised parties to help with the harvest. They were inspected and no nuisance occurred. Where camping does occur it is only for a short period.

BED BUGS : There were no cases of bed bug infection reported during the year.

SECTION D.—HOUSING.

During the year 12 new houses were constructed. Of these 2 were by private owners, the remaining 10 were built by the Local Authority under the Agricultural Scheme. These were of a very good standard and a considerable improvement on previous houses built by the Authority.

INSPECTION OF DWELLING HOUSES DURING THE YEAR.

- (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects under Public Health and Housing Acts ... 164
- (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ... 245
- Number of dwelling houses found not to be, in all respects, reasonably fit for human habitation ... 77

ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS DURING THE YEAR.

Proceedings under Public Health Acts :

- Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ... 5
- Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :
 - By Owners ... 5
 - By Local Authority in default of Owners ... Nil

VAN DWELLINGS.

There are only four van dwellings in the district; these are situated in Abbey Lane, Leintwardine. They are of the permanent type and have their own water supply and drainage. They are mostly overcrowded on present standards and require dealing with as soon as possible.

SECTION E.—INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

231 inspections were made at the various food shops in the district. One notice was served for linewashing and roof repairs, and this was complied with.

Condemned as unfit for human consumption:—

Meat	...	...	206 lbs.	Bacon	...	...	46 lbs.
Tinned Meat	...	...	53 lbs.	Cheese	...	...	10 lbs.
Tinned Vegetables	...	...	80 lbs.	Fish	...	...	34 lbs.
Tinned Milk	...	...	30 lbs.	Tea	...	...	6 lbs.
Tinned Fruit	...	...	98 lbs.	Syrup	...	...	2 lbs.
Oranges	...	...	814 lbs.	Soup	...	...	9 lbs.
Lemons	...	...	20 lbs.	Suet	...	...	2 lbs.
Butter	...	...	10 lbs.				

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

Central slaughtering is carried out at the Borough of Leominster Slaughter House. For this reason very little meat is condemned in this district.

SECTION F.—PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE DURING THE YEAR:

During 1944 a total of 231 notifications of Infectious Disease were received. Measles again provided the largest number, namely 119, and the second highest figure was in respect of whooping cough, of which there were 69 cases in the district during the year. There were 18 cases of Scarlet Fever, 4 of Diphtheria and none of Cerebro Spinal Meningitis. Puerperal Pyrexia was notified on two occasions only.

Only 3 cases of Dysentery were notified this year. These were all of the mild Sonne type. A small proportion of persons in the community are symptomless carriers who harbour the organism in the Intestinal Tract. Contamination of foodstuffs by these carriers and by people suffering from the disease occurs very easily if personal hygiene is not carefully attended to.

ANALYSIS OF TOTAL NOTIFIED CASES, ACCORDING TO AGE:

DISEASE.		AGE OF PATIENT.													Over Un-		Total
		0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-10	10-15	15-20	20-30	30-40	40	known		
Measles	...	3	8	19	10	14	14	13	20	18	4	—	2	—	3	119	
Whooping Cough	...	3	4	5	4	8	8	7	13	14	—	—	1	1	1	69	
Pneumonia	...	—	—	1	1	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	1	4	—	9	
Scarlet Fever	...	—	—	—	1	—	—	5	2	2	1	4	2	1	—	18	
Erysipelas	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2	—	2	2	7	
Diphtheria	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	2	—	4	
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	2	
Ophthalmia	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Neonatorum	...	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	
Dysentery	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	3	
Encephalitis	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Lethargica	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	2	

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

The state of immunisation of the child population of the district at the end of 1944 is indicated in the table below :

Under 5 years of age		Between 5 and 15 years of age	
Number	Percentage of group	Number	Percentage of group
227	28.2%	1,078	51.2%

Though the numbers of children immunised is much lower than was to have been expected from the considerable efforts which have been made to persuade parents to have their children treated, the percentages attained approximate to and in some instances are higher than those reached in other parts of the country. The lack of interest at present shown by many parents exemplifies a well-recognised social phenomenon which is also reflected in the low proportion of children vaccinated against Small Pox and in the small take-up of the Ministry of Food Vitamin preparations for infants. Following the rush to have children protected when the campaign for Diphtheria Immunisation was inaugurated in 1931, there has been a continuing lack of response by parents who did not then accept treatment, even though the efficiency of our publicity methods has been stepped up by the co-operation of the District Nurse Health Visitors and School Medical Officers, and by the distribution of new leaflets and pre-paid acceptance cards to all homes where there are children under the age of 15 years.

By arrangement with the County Education Committee special immunisation sessions are held at the nearest school whenever completed acceptance forms for 5 or more children (of school or pre-school age) are received. When the number of acceptances is less than 5 they are retained until more are received, or if the parents wish immediate action to be taken they are directed to the nearest Child Welfare Clinic.

Immunisation material is issued from the Leominster Office free of charge to doctors for the treatment of children in their practices. It should be noted that private doctors, some of whom do a lot of immunisation in their practices, do not make a return to the Public Health Office on the number of children treated by them. These children therefore could not be included in the figures set out above.

TUBERCULOSIS.

At the end of 1944 the Tuberculosis Register contained the names of 49 males and 23 females who normally reside within the district.

During the year 14 new cases were notified, 11 on account of Pulmonary Tuberculosis and three because of the presence of the disease in parts of the body other than the lungs.

During the same period, five deaths of persons suffering from Tuberculosis occurred.

CASES ON THE TUBERCULOSIS REGISTER.

Year.	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Total.
1939	...	23	...	15	38
1940	...	22	...	18	40
1941	...	24	...	22	46
1942	...	27	...	23	50
1943	...	39	...	23	62
1944	...	41	...	22	63

VENEREAL DISEASES.

The Venereal Diseases Treatment Service is administered by the Comity Council. In view of the increasing importance of this problem and of the interest taken in it by all who have the welfare of the community at heart it is of some significance to record that in 1944 thirteen civilians (all female) from this district commenced treatment at the V.D. Clinic, Hereford. The corresponding figure for 1942 was one, a female. There were none in 1943.

CAUSES OF DEATH (all ages).

DISEASE.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Tuberculosis	4	1	5
Influenza	2	1	3
Cancer (all forms)	5	12	17
Heart and Blood Vessels	27	30	57
Bronchitis and Pneumonia and other Respiratory Diseases	9	9	18
Maternal Causes	0	1	1
Diseases of Digestive System	2	4	6
Nephritis	3	0	3
Congenital conditions (infants) .. .	6	2	8
Violence	1	0	1
Other causes	7	8	15
TOTAL	66	68	134